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A Manuscript of Gul ū Naurūz, a Seventeenth Century Persian Romance, in the Library of Columbia University.—By Dr. ABRAHAM YOHANNAN, Columbia University, New York City.

AMONG the manuscripts in the library of Columbia University there is a small octavo volume of a seventeenth century Persian romantic poem, to which it is appropriate to call further attention. It is a manuscript presented to the library by Mr. S. P. Avery. The book is entitled *Gul ū Naurūz* (گل و نوروز), or Rose and New Year's Day; and it contains an attractive specimen of the romantic epopée of Persia, which may be of some interest to students of mediæval literature as well as to Orientalists, because of the parallels which it affords to compositions in the West.

From the introductory lines of the romance we learn that the writer of this poetical work was a Turk, and in the colophon we are told his name, *Mirzā Daulat Rizā Bēg Ḥanīkī* (میرزا دولت رضا بیگ حنیکی), and that he wrote the poem in the years A.H. 1033–1036 (A.D. 1621–1624). According to his own statement, he wrote it originally in Turkish, and afterward translated it into Persian. It is a result of this process, evidently, that a few Turkish words are to be found in the book. Thus, the words *šai* (شی), 'thing,' and '*aurat* (عورت), 'woman, wife,' which are Arabic-Turkish, have occasionally been employed, instead of the regular Persian terms, which are *čiz* (چیز) for the former and *zan* (زن) for the latter.

A similar work which our writer may have taken as a model is the *Naurūz ū Gul*, composed by Khwājū Kirmānī (خواجو کرمانی) in A.H. 742 (A.D. 1341–1342); cf. Ethé, in *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*, ii. 249. According to Erdman, *ZDMG.*, ii. 212, the manuscript of this poem in the University Library of Kasan was copied by Ḥājī Sinānī (حاجی سنانی) at Samarqand in A.H. 1038 (A.D. 1629), and was dedicated to the vizir

Tājuddīn Aḥmad ‘Irāqī (تاج الدين احمد عراقی), and comprised 5230 half-verses or 2615 full verses. Another copy of Khwājū Kirmānī’s work is found in the British Museum; it was probably made by one Tūrānshāh (توران شاه), according to Rieu, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, ii. 867 and 622. The title of the book is there given as *Gul ū Naurūz*, precisely as in our manuscript, whereas Ḥājī Sinānī, according to Erdman, calls it *Naurūz ū Gul*, the order of the names being reversed. There is still another book of the same nature by Maulānā Jalāl uddīn Aḥmad of Shīrāz (جلال الدين احمد شیرازی), commonly called Jalāl Ṭabīb (جلال طبیب), composed in A.H. 734 (A.D. 1334), and dedicated to the Prince Ġiyāth uddīn Kaikhusrau; cf. Rieu, *Catalogue of Persian MSS.*, ii. 867; Ethé, *loc. cit. supra*; Daulatshāh (ed. Browne, p. 298); Pizzi, *Storia della Poesia Persiana*, ii. 210.

With the exception of the title, *Gul ū Naurūz*, almost all the names of the persons and places connected with this present romance are different from those mentioned in the manuscript of Khwājū Kirmānī, as briefly described by Erdman and Ethé. Khwājū Kirmānī, for example, says that Naurūz was the son of Shāh Fīrūz (شاه فیروز), of Khorāsān, and Gul was the daughter of the Byzantine emperor (قیسر روم). The present manuscript, on the other hand, says that Naurūz was the son of Shāh Fer-rukḥ (شاه فرخ) of Nau Shād (نوشاد), and that the father of Gul was Mushkīn Shāh (مشکین شاه) of Ferkhār (فرخار). A great number of similar divergences in names and incidents might be noted, as far as can be gathered from so scanty a description.

With reference to the *Gul ū Naurūz* of Jalāl Ṭabīb, I cannot judge, as no detailed information is accessible to me beyond the brief statements of Rieu, Ethé, and Pizzi; but the introductory verses of all three manuscripts vary. The opening lines of Khwājū Kirmānī’s poem, according to Rieu (*Catalogue*, ii. 622), run:

بنام نقشبنده خلوت خاك عذار افروز مه رویان افلاك

The manuscript of Jalāl Tabīb begins thus, according to Rieu (*Catalogue*, ii. 867):

ثنائی در خور آن حضرت پاک نیاید در وجود از ذرّۀ خال

The beginning of the Columbia manuscript, on the other hand, is different from both the others, and runs as follows:

خداوندا دلم را تازه گردان رضائی را بلند آواز گردان

So much may be said by the way of general introduction. We may now turn directly to the work itself.

The manuscript as it lies before us makes a volume of 66 folios, each measuring $12\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ centimeters, size of the written portion, 21×11 centimeters size of the whole page. It is bound in maroon leather, and the tops and edges of the pages are appropriately gilded. The first page is illuminated and the remaining ones are sprinkled with gold and framed with gilded marginal lines.

The writing is in a good clear *ta'liq* hand, two columns of 12 lines to the page.

Among the peculiarities of the writing may be noticed the occasional use of ج for چ. In cases where the long straight line is used for the letters س and ش, the former is sometimes distinguished by three dots below the line (ـــ).

Turning to the meter of the poem, it may be added that the work is in the *mathnavi* (مثنوی) form, and consists of 1560 rhyming couplets. It is divided into 126 sections, which are indicated by rubric headings in the manuscript.

The first six sections (§§ 1-6) of the poem are devoted to an invocation of God for divine grace and inspiration for the task, and there are the usual ascriptions of praise to the deity and to his prophet Mohammed, whose ascent into heaven is briefly described according to the Koran. The seventh section (§ 7) is a eulogy of the great Moghul ruler Shāh Jahāngīr (شاه جهانگیر), to whom it should be said that the writer dedicated his poem. The eighth section (§ 8) is a reflection on the existing lack of faith in the world. In the ninth section (§ 9) the author recounts the inspiration he has received in a dream to

write the book. With the tenth section (§ 10) the poet is at last ready to begin the romantic story, the narration of which occupies the remaining 116 sections. The main parts of it may be briefly epitomized in the following paraphrase.

In the country of Nau Shād (نوشاد) in Persia (?) there was a great and famous king named Ferrukh (فرخ), whose happy reign was marred by the sad fact that he had no son to succeed to the crown. After many years of expectation and earnest prayer, a son was at last born to him on the first day of the new year. It was for this auspicious reason that the child was given the significant name of New Year's day, or Naurūz. The birth and childhood of the boy are depicted in a section (§ 11) of 20 lines. While still in his boyhood the future hero became well versed in every branch of science and learning; and in time, when his strength waxed, he grew also to be a mighty hunter, an accomplishment which was as much admired among the ancient Persians (cf. Herodotus, i. 136, and Xenophon's *Cyropædia*) as it was in the days of Nimrod or Behram Gur.

The poem then proceeds to descant upon the charm and attractiveness of the youth's personality, and recounts how on one occasion, Narcissus-like, he was struck by the marvelous beauty of his own face, which he saw reflected in a cup of wine. When the power of the wine of which he had partaken overcame his senses, Naurūz fell asleep, and in his dream beheld a vision of a lovely maiden, a girl of surpassing beauty, the fair Rose. He became intoxicated with the charm of the lovely vision, and, like Shelley's Alastor in search of the Arab maid, our gallant Naurūz betook himself to the desert, trying to realize in waking the truth of his rapturous dream.

In his wanderings he encounters a caravan and falls in with a member of the company who bears the name of Nightingale, Bulbul, and the latter extends to him the hand of sympathy in the longings of his heart. Bulbul tells him that the image he beheld in his vision was none other than Gul, the beautiful daughter of Mushkīn Shāh of Ferkhār, which was the native land of Bulbul himself (§§ 12-19). Upon hearing this, the joyous Naurūz despatches Bulbul at once to Ferkhār, to seek for Gul and to convey to her the message of his love (§ 20).

The faithful Bulbul succeeds in obtaining the Shāh's consent for his daughter to be betrothed to Naurūz; but the suit of the

lover is opposed by a cruel woman, Sūsan (سوسن) by name, the governess of Gul. After being rebuked by Gul and liberally bribed by Bulbul, Sūsan is won over, and not only makes an apology to Gul but even acts as a go-between (§§ 21-29).

But the tardy foot of time moves more slowly than ever for the impatient Naurūz, whose anxiety allows him no repose and impels him to wait no longer for the lingering Bulbul to return. He wanders again into the desert. Upon seeing his son's distress, Shāh Ferrukh decides to send Naurūz with a large army and vast treasures directly to Ferkhār.

On the way, Behman (بهمن), the chief officer accompanying Naurūz (he is spoken of as an Abyssinian (حبش),—unless *habaš* is simply 'servant' here), opposes the young lover's plan of going to Ferkhār, saying to Naurūz that it would be a great humiliation in case Gul should refuse his suit (§§ 30-39). Failing to induce the ardent Naurūz to return, Behman takes a large portion of the treasures and of the army, and goes back to the capital by night. Naurūz, however, arrives safely at Ferkhār and is welcomed by Shāh Mushkīn, the father of Gul. His suit is presented in person, and every preparation is made for the young prince to receive the hand of the maiden (§§ 40-58). But an obstacle unexpectedly arises; a rival appears on the scene. The Khāqān (خاقان) of China sends a more imposing embassy for the purpose of securing the hand of the lovely Gul for his own son. His suit is crowned with the Shāh's favor; he wins the day, and carries off the unhappy Gul on the road to China (§§ 59-73). But Naurūz follows the party on the journey eastward (§ 74). One stormy night he tries to carry off Gul to his own country (§ 75); but the pair is overtaken in the mountains, and brought back as captives by a slave of the Khāqān, who is named Yeldā (يلدا) (§§ 76, 77). Nothing daunted, however, the lovers make a second attempt to escape, and this time they succeed. Gul, according to the custom of the country, is sent to the temple to learn the method of worship. Naurūz also finds his way thither, but both of them being conscience-stricken at the practice of idolatry, determine upon flight. The Khāqān and the whole of Čīn and Māčīn (چين وماچين) are greatly excited; men are sent in every direction in pursuit, but without success. Gul and Naurūz with great

difficulty escape an assemblage of *daevs*, whom they meet in the desert. Soon after this they arrive at the palace of the Sheikh of Najd (شيخ نجد), who attempts by means of a witch's charms to win the heart of Gul. When she and Naurūz perceive this they leave Najd (§§ 78–82). They manage to reach Bahr Qulzum (بحر قلزم), ancient Clysma, and, after the familiar manner of both Eastern and Western mediæval romance, embark in a boat, which soon suffers shipwreck in the gulf of Oman. All this, as my friend Professor Jackson reminds me, sounds much like incidents in the old English romances or the *Gesta Romanorum*. Though separated, the lovers, of course, are not suffered to perish. Gul, floating on the sea, is found by a diver (غواص) in the pearl fishery of the king or prince of Aden, which is one year's journey from China. The diver brings her to the shore to take her to the king. On the way they encounter several fierce lions, which she kills on the spot. The report of her prowess soon spreads abroad. The king of Aden has her summoned into his presence, and charmed by her beauty as well as by her heroism receives her with great honor (§§ 83–98).

The fortunes or misfortunes of Naurūz are equally romantic. He floats on a piece of timber to the Arabian shore, and enters a fisherman's hut close by the sea. The fisherman, being too poor to supply his needs, informs the Vizir, who also dwells near. The Vizir, after entertaining Naurūz for a while, takes him to the king of Yemen, who honors him with high office and rank (§§ 99–107).

But an old-time feud existed between the king of Yemen, to whom Naurūz had gone, and the king of Aden, in whose army Gul was commissioned. So chance brings it about that war is declared between these hostile rulers. The story of the conflict follows. After several engagements, circumstances dramatically bring Naurūz and Gul face to face in battle. Each recognizes the other, and the result may be imagined. The war is stopped at once and lasting friendship is established between the two kings (§§ 108–118). Gul and Naurūz, by the permission of their kings, make a pilgrimage to Mekka and Medina.

Meanwhile the kings Ferrukh and Mushkin Shāh, from the time they hear of the flight of their children from China, are in

a state of great uneasiness, and wander about the world in search of them. Finally they also conclude to make a pilgrimage to the sacred land, to pray there for the restoration of their dear ones. At Mekka the parents and the children meet unexpectedly and have a happy reunion. The party returns home in peace, and Naurūz succeeds his father at the latter's death (§§ 119-126).

Such, in brief, is the romance of Gul and Naurūz. The whole story, as it seems to me we are justified in believing, contains certain mystic elements. The names of Gul, Naurūz, Sūsan, Bulbul, etc., may be not without symbolic significance. The Persian New Year occurs in the Spring, and the love of the springtime for the nightingale is as old as Persian lyric poetry. The lily belongs rightly amid the same mystic company of flowers; and numerous other symbolic phrases like the 'fervent heat of Naurūz,' 'love opening the breast of the rose,' or 'the sunny days of the spring time causing the bud to blossom,' recall the allegorical energy of the Iranian mystic poets.

In conclusion I may say that I hope to gather some more details regarding this interesting work in connection with the other Persian poems that bear the same title.